



**Commonwealth of Kentucky
Governor Ernie Fletcher's Communications Office**

**For Immediate Release
July 11, 2005**

**Contact: Carla Blanton
Michael Goins
Jodi Whitaker
502-564-2611**

**GOVERNOR ERNIE FLETCHER ANNOUNCES NEW INITIATIVES FOR
KENTUCKY'S MERIT SYSTEM**

*Governor to form Blue Ribbon Task Force on Merit System; Personnel Cabinet to
create referral office for merit jobs*

FRANKFORT, KY-Governor Ernie Fletcher, joined by Personnel Cabinet Secretary Erwin Roberts, announced two new initiatives regarding Kentucky's merit system today in Frankfort.

During the press conference Governor Fletcher announced the formation of a Blue Ribbon Task Force to examine and make recommendations on possible changes to the merit system. The Governor cited a report commissioned by former Governor Brereton Jones in 1993 that found several problems in the merit system that were not addressed, calling the merit law quote "obsolete and ineffective".

Quote by Governor's Office

In addition to finding the merit law obsolete, the 1993 report identified additional problems, including:

- "Programs not reflective of modern practices"
- "Confusion; compensation inequities in multiple systems"
- "Too many rigid, confusing statutes and regulations"
- "Inconsistent interpretation/enforcement of policies and procedures"
- "Too many job classification and salary grade levels"
- "Rather than revise KRS 18A to accommodate agency needs (fixing the system), agencies have been allowed to be exempt from that statute in today's multiple system in which there is: duplicity, no reciprocity or portability between systems, confusion among employees and legislators who don't understand the system, and inequity in salaries"

The members of the Blue Ribbon Task Force will be announced in the coming days, which will be tasked with beginning work immediately and submit their report to Governor Fletcher by October 1, 2005. The members of the task force will be made up of legislators, merit employees and other parties.

Governor Fletcher stated during today's announcement that he will invite the Attorney General's Office to participate in the task force.

In addition to the Blue Ribbon Task Force, Governor Fletcher also announced the creation of a Merit System Referral Office by the Personnel Cabinet. The office will be responsible for receiving recommendations and referrals for jobs within the merit system.

"It will allow open and fair consideration of merit employment recommendations and referrals, recognizing that recommendations can and should have an appropriate role in the merit system," said Erwin Roberts, Secretary, Personnel Cabinet.